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LETTERS FROM BELGIUM.

[Continued from page 42.]

LETTER V.

Belgium, August, 1842.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I HAVE to acknowledge the receipt of your very polite letter, and to apologize for not having sooner replied to a request which can only give me pleasure. I shall be very happy indeed to give you every information possible, regarding the Roman Catholic religion, in this wholly Catholic land; and by addressing my letters to you, instead of to my good old Thomas, and other neighbours, they will, as you say, have them read to them, and you will also have the power of reading them to any other friend or neighbour you may choose. There is no need for you to fear you are "presuming on our very slight acquaintance" made a few years since, during your long summer visit to our mutual friends. It can only be a gratification to a Roman Catholic to find any one awakened to inquire concerning our most holy religion, and so great a satisfaction is it to me, that I willingly lay aside other very important duties for the pleasure of acceding to your request, and beg you to consider in future, that I am the obliged person in this correspondence. The only condition on my part shall be, that you allow me still to address myself to my dear old villagers, and to write about the poor, as it was my original intention to do: leaving it to your judgment, to omit reading to them any thing which seems addressed solely to you, and which may be, therefore, above their comprehension, or about which they could not be interested.

In my last letter to Thomas, I had reached the Offertory in my description of the Mass; and I remember I left off in despair of ever finding language to convey the feelings of a Roman Catholic, as he approaches, even in thought, the solemn moments of the consecration.

You say you cannot all at once realize to your mind, the idea of offering sacrifice, but that it seems very beautiful to do so, and that you think there must be something "very consoling and satisfactory, in rendering a service to God in which there is reality." It is precisely this "reality" which makes our religion so certain to us. How often do we go into church with feelings so cold and languid, that when it is only to pray, we return home without having given God any service! But when we go to hear Mass—that is, to offer sacrifice by the hands of our

Priest—by uniting our intention with his, we perform a real service, we have something certain and fixed, upon which we can look back with satisfaction. But you will understand this better, as you have the Mass more fully explained to you.

It is so long since I wrote my last letter, that I fear to forget what I have therein explained, or whether I said enough to give you a clear notion of the Mass as a sacrifice. You know what it is as a sacrament, by your own rite of what your church calls, "The Supper of the Lord." But it is both a *Sacrament* and a *Sacrifice*. It is for want of understanding it in this two-fold sense, that there is so much confusion in the minds of even very learned men in England. Our clergy are often astonished at the mistakes they thus make in speaking of the Mass. Having in view only the idea of a sacrament, they do not allow us to use it as a sacrifice, at least they do not comprehend how we do so. I could point out to you many passages in the Oxford Tracts and other recent writings, which our little catechism children would smile at. And our clergy are at a loss to understand how a doctrine which is to us so very natural and simple, should be so completely hidden from men of their high intellect. I think it better to draw your attention at present solely to the Mass as a sacrifice, and in a future letter, to speak of it as a sacrament. As a sacrifice it is available for all who are present at its oblation, or for whom, though absent, it is offered by the Priest or people. As a sacrament it is only available to those who partake of it—that is, communicate. Thus to the Priest it is always both a sacrifice and a sacrament, because he both offers and consumes it—or in other words, he offers and communicates. To the people it is always a sacrifice, but only a sacrament when they communicate. The prayer called the Offertory being said, and which is a sort of introduction to the offering of the bread and wine—the Priest having the portion of bread which he intends to consecrate placed on a small salver called a Patena, elevates it a little, and repeats the words: "Accept, O Holy Father, almighty and eternal God, this unspotted Host," &c. You will observe that these words and all others which are used, signifying that the bread and wine are Jesus Christ, are used so in anticipation of their becoming so. No change whatever takes place in them before the words of consecration. Christ offers himself only to God at the instant the Priest consecrates; but as all cannot be explained at that moment, it is explained by anticipation. The people renew their attention at this moment, and offer



private prayers, to be preserved from all distraction from this time, and that they may assist with the attention, respect, and awe, due to such august mysteries. Also it is usual to recal the special intention for which one intends to offer this Mass by the hands of the Priest.

Wine and water have been placed ready at the side of the Altar, and the child who serves the Mass now approaches with these, holding the wine in a vessel in his right hand, and the water in another vessel in his left. The Priest pours a small portion of the wine, about a dessert spoonful, into the consecrated chalice, and with a little spoon takes a drop of water, which he mixes with this wine. It is his duty to ascertain that no mistake has been made, and that it is really wine he uses, as the Sacred Presence is promised only to the elements of *wine* and bread. No prepared liquor may be used—only the pure juice of the grapes. I believe it is doubted whether the *rent* wine used by your Church, has the requisite purity for consecration. I forgot to say too, that the church uses unleavened bread, as Jesus Christ used such. It is made of the finest wheaten flour, and is prepared by Nuns or other pious persons, who are chosen to prepare it, to insure its being genuine. Perhaps you already know that it is made in the form of a wafer, and is white like pearl. Those consumed by the Priests are about two inches in diameter, those for the people half the size.

While the Priest is putting the water and wine into the chalice, he repeats the prayer, "O God, who in creating," &c. He then turns to the altar, and elevating the cup a little, offers it to God, using the prayer, "We offer unto thee, O Lord, the chalice of salvation," &c.—still anticipatory—and signifying the cup that is about to be the chalice of salvation.

Having replaced the chalice on the altar, and the bread on the linen before it, he repeats the prayer, "Accept us, O Lord," &c.

He then solemnly invokes the Holy Spirit the sanctifier to come and bless the sacrifice.

The child now again approaches with a salver and small vessel of water, the Priest places his hands over the salver, and the child pours water over them: this ablution is appointed in reverence to the sacrifice, and significant of the purity that must accompany such an offering in the soul and body of him who offers it. The priest bowing before the altar recites the prayer, "Receive, O holy Trinity," &c.—And then turning to the congregation, reminds them to "pray, that their sacrifice and his may be acceptable to God." To which they mentally reply, "May the Lord receive the sacrifice from thy hands, to the praise and glory of his own name, and to our benefit (recollecting his own intention or intentions in offering this sacrifice) and that of all his holy Church."

The prayers called *secrets*, (so called because they are silently offered,) follow, and are a second collect, in the same intention as the first. Some of these have been retained by your church, but we have many others which would be quite new to you. They are most beautiful prayers, and if collected would form a treasure of devotion, being varied to all circumstances and conditions; the same as the sacrifice.

The short sentences which precede the preface, are the same as those retained in your prayer-book. "Lift up your hearts," &c. The prefaces vary according to the Mass, and are most dignified and rousing. That for the festival of Trinity Sunday, and which is used on other Sundays throughout the year, is amongst the finest compositions of our church. At the close of the preface, the solemn address to Jehovah is used: "Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of Hosts. Heaven and earth are full of the majesty of thy glory. Hosannah in the highest. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosannah in the highest." A bell is distinctly rung; and the congregation thus warned, kneel devoutly down on the ground, though weak persons, or those who cannot kneel long, *may* remain sitting till the bell is again rung just before the consecration. But the words "Blessed is he that cometh" have warned the worshippers that the Lord of glory is about to come before them; and their best feelings are aroused to receive Him, coming now—now in these very moments that are passing,—from His seat on the right-hand of God, from among cherubim and seraphim, angels and archangels, who have taken up our loud and adoring shout of welcome. It has reached the gate of heaven, it is echoed on to the mercy-seat, the Lamb has replied: "Lo, I come!" And the ancients fall down and "cast their crowns at his feet" as he passes. And the "thousands of thousands" of angels that are round about the throne, strike their golden harps, and say, "Worthy the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and divinity; and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and benediction." And every creature which is in heaven, the saints with their golden vials full of odours, are uniting with us on earth, in the same hosanna of benediction—Hosanna in the highest. The Lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world,—still to be slain till time shall be no longer,—our Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedech, our Victim, to be our whole burnt-offering, "a perpetual offering,"—comes down *now* from heaven, to offer himself to each heart here present who has invoked Him. He comes as a propitiatory victim for sin, as the giver of grace, as the daily friend, to return to heaven in the odour of a sweet-smelling savour before his heavenly Father as the sacrifice consumes upon our altar, obtaining for us salvation, and benediction, and peace, and grace in this world, and glory for the next. "We have, therefore, only humbly to pray and beseech thee, most merciful Father, through Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord, that thou wouldst vouchsafe to accept and bless these gifts, these presents, these holy unspotted sacrifices." Heaven is now opened to us, and we raise our hearts in most earnest supplication. We ask all that we most stand in need of in these fervent moments. We do not come with prayer alone, but with sacrifice, a sacrifice "holy, unspotted." We offer it to thee first, for thy holy Catholic Church, for thy servant Gregory our Pope, for our bishop, for our king; for these it is our first duty to pray. We offer it for all orthodox believers and professors of the Catholic and apostolic faith. "We beseech thee, be mindful, through this of-



fering which thy beloved Son Jesus Christ is about to make, of Himself for us, of those most near and dear to us. \* \* \* (Here the Priest has many to pray for, and there is a pause sufficient for the congregation to bear in mind all he would pray for.) And knowing the whole host of heaven is uniting with him in adoration of Him he is about to receive from among them, he names before God some of the most illustrious saints. At this moment heaven and earth seem to be united, and he feels the union. The "communion of saints," is to the believer a reality. He knows that every angel and saint must be interested in the work of Christ at that moment, and he communicates with them in thought and feeling.

All is prepared; we have only again to supplicate that our oblation may be received, which the Church most earnestly teaches us, in language the strongest she can use—and three times repeated:

"We therefore beseech thee, O Lord, graciously to accept this oblation of our servitude, as also of thy whole family; and to dispose our days in thy peace, preserve us from eternal damnation, and rank us in the number of thine elect. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

And again: "Which oblation do thou, O God, vouchsafe, in all respects, to bless, approve, ratify, and accept; that it may be made for us the body and blood of thy most beloved Son Jesus Christ our Lord."

"HE SPAKE, AND IT WAS DONE."

After all that can be said or written about the sacred words of consecration, they carry their own meaning with them, and the Catholic to whom the consecrating Priest represents Jesus Christ, has their explanation in them. The Priest is acting in the very name of Christ. He places his hands over the bread and over the wine, and Christ speaks by his mouth, and says,

"THIS IS MY BODY,  
THIS IS MY BLOOD."

He speaks, he calls it His Body and His Blood.

And as in all other his declarations there can only be truth, so now this his declaration is received by the believer.

As soon as these words are spoken the bread becomes His Body, and the wine becomes His Blood.

He has spoken, and it is done.

[To be continued.]

Money cannot procure happiness; it must be sought from labour and virtue.

He who begins to love, must prepare himself to suffer.

Self-love grossly persuades every one, that what he does for decency's sake, is done to him for the sake of justice.

Instead of being cunning with a view of pleasing, it will suffice to be good.

Atheists should say things that are perfectly clear: Now, one must have lost one's senses, to say it is perfectly clear, that the soul is mortal.

False friends are like the shadow on the dial, which appears if the sky is serene, and which hides itself if it is overcast.

The appearance of virtue is an additional vice in a wicked man.

## ON TIME.

SAY, is there aught that can convey

An image of Time's transient stay?

'Tis an hand-breadth; 'tis a tale;

'Tis a vessel under sail;

'Tis a courier's straining steed;

'Tis a shuttle in its speed;

'Tis an eagle in its way,

Darting down upon its prey;

'Tis an arrow in its flight,

Mocking the pursuing sight;

'Tis a vapour in the air;

'Tis a whirlwind rushing there;

'Tis a short-liv'd fading flower;

'Tis a rainbow on a shower;

'Tis a momentary ray

Smiling in a winter's day;

'Tis a torrent's rapid stream;

'Tis a shadow; 'tis a dream;

'Tis the closing watch of night

Dying at the rising light;

'Tis a landscape vainly gay

Painted upon crumbling clay;

'Tis a lamp that wastes its fires;

'Tis a smoke that quick expires;

'Tis a bubble; 'tis a sigh—

Mortal, be prepared to die!

## ON ETERNITY.

WHAT is eternity? Can aught

Paint its duration to the thought?

Tell ev'ry beam the sun emits,

When in sublimest noon he sits;

Tell ev'ry light-wing'd mote that strays

Within his ample round of rays;

Tell all the leaves and all the buds

That crown the gardens and the woods;

Tell all the spires of grass the meads

Produce, when Spring propitious leads

The new-born year; tell all the drops

The night upon their bended tops

Sheds in soft silence, to display

Their beauties with the rising day;

Tell all the sands the ocean laves;

Tell all its changes, all its waves;

Or tell, with more laborious pains,

The drops its mighty mass contains;

Be this astonishing account

Augmented by the full amount.

Of all the drops the clouds have shed,

Where'er their watery fleeces spread,

Thro' all the tracts of Time's long tour,

From Adam to the present hour—

Still short the sum, nor can it vie

With the more num'rous years that lie

Embosom'd in eternity.

Were there a belt that could contain,

In its vast orb, the earth and main;

With figures were it clust'rd o'er,

And not one cypher in the score;

And could your labouring thought assign

The total of the crowded line;

How scant the amount! th' attempt how vain,

To reach Duration's endless chain!

For when as many years are run,

Unbounded age is but begun.

Attend, O man, with awe divine,

For this eternity is thine.

HOLME.—The Saxon *holme*, according to Bede, was a river island, or plain grassy ground upon river sides. Therefore, says Dr. Cowell, where any place is called by that name, or where this syllable is joined with any other in the names of places, it signifies a place, surrounded with water; as Hayholme, Hemp-holme, and Hallitreeholme, (Holly-tree-holme) in Holderness.



## THE FATAL FRIENDSHIP

*[Continued from page 69.]*

"AFTER a ride of half an hour through the shady lanes which skirted the ramparts, they reached the back entrance of the gothic building before mentioned, and Florian entered this singular sanctuary with emotions not easily described. The old headsman was in high spirits; and the blunt but genuine kindness and cordiality of his manners soon removed from the mind of his guest every lurking suspicion that some treachery was intended. The table was promptly covered with an excellent breakfast, and the old man sent a message to his daughter, requesting that she would bring a bottle of the best wine in the cellar.

"Florian fixed his eyes upon the door in shrinking anticipation. He suspected new attempts to ensnare him to the headsman's purpose; and, notwithstanding his firm determination to resist them, he recoiled with fastidious disgust from the possible necessity of contending with the meretricious advances of a bold and reckless female, whose limited opportunities of marriage would impel her to lure him by any means to her father's object. How widely different were his emotions when the door opened, and his lovely travelling companion, whom, in the terrors of the past night, he had forgotten, entered, in blushing embarrassment, with the bottle of wine! In a tumult of mingled apprehension and delight, he started from his chair, but the cordial greeting he intended was checked by a significant wink from the lively fair one as she passed behind her father to the table. It was obvious to Florian that she wished to conceal their previous acquaintance, and with a silent bow he resumed his seat, while the smiling maid, whom her father introduced to his guest by the name of Madelon, took a chair between them, and the conversation soon became general and exhilarating.

"The continued fever of apprehension which had almost unhinged the reason of the timid Florian, now rapidly subsided. The cordial hospitality of the old headsman soon made him feel at home in an abode which he had once contemplated with horror and disgust; while the artless attentions and fascinating vivacity of the pretty Madelon soon wove around him a magic spell, and invested the gothic chambers of her father's antique mansion with all the splendours of Aladdin's palace.

"Motherless at the age of fourteen, and secluded by her father's vocation from all society save occasional intercourse with relatives of the same degraded caste, the headsman's daughter had been early accustomed to rely upon her own resources.

"Most of her leisure hours had been devoted to a comprehensive course of historical reading, from which her unpolished but strong-minded father conceived that she would derive, not only amusement and instruction, but that sustaining fortitude so essential to the station in which her lot was cast. Thus her innocent and active mind, untainted by the licentiousness and infidelity of French romance, acquired concentration and strength; the study of sacred and profane history induced habits of salutary reflection, and her character gradually developed a masculine yet unpretending energy, which admirably fitted her to become the helpmate of a man so timid and indecisive as Florian. Madelon combined with clear and vigorous perceptions, a degree of personal attraction rarely seen in France, and no small portion of the feminine grace and fascination peculiar to well-educated French women, while to these advantages were superadded eyes of radiant lustre, a voice

rich in soft and musical inflections, and a smile of irresistible archness and witchery. Accustomed, from her limited opportunities of observation, to regard men as collectively coarse and uncultivated, she had been immediately and powerfully attracted by the refined and gentle manners of Florian, during their four leagues' journey; and to one who felt the value of knowledge, and eagerly sought to extend her means of pursuing it, there was, on farther acquaintance, a charm in his comprehensive attainments and in the classic elegance of his diction, which compensated for the unmanly timidity and morbid infirmity of purpose, so easily distinguishable in his character and conduct.

"In Florian, whose feelings were fortified by reminiscences of a prior attachment, the progress of sentiment was slower, but not less certain in its tendency. His silent worship of Angelique had always been accompanied by doubts and misgivings innumerable. He thought her lost to him for ever; he felt that all his prospects of professional advancement were blighted by the disastrous incident at D.; and his consequent flight; and insensibly he yielded to the charm of daily and hourly intercourse with the bewitching Madelon. The consciousness of her admiring prepossession, and of his own superior attainments, gave to him, while conversing with her, a soothing self-possession, an expansion of thought and feeling, and a glowing facility of elocution, which he had never yet experienced, and which proved a source of exquisite and inexhaustible gratification. Her unceasing sympathy and kindness, her flattering anticipation of his wishes, lulled the anguish of his recollections, and her sparkling gaiety never failed to rouse his drooping spirits. He soon learned to estimate at its true value the rare combination of gentleness and energy which her character displayed; while her courageous self-possession and unflinching resources, under every difficulty, made him regard her as a woman gifted beyond her sex with those qualities in which he felt himself most deficient. In short, feelings of deep and lasting attachment stole insensibly into the hearts of the youthful pair. Florian had surrendered all his sympathies to Madelon before he was conscious of the power she had gained over his happiness; and their mutual affection was betrayed and sealed by word and pledge before he reflected upon the inevitable consequences. Too soon, alas! the spell which bound him was broken, and the scene of enchantment was abruptly changed into a chaos of interminable dismay and anxiety.

"Several months had flitted past, when the old headsman, after ascertaining from his daughter that the affections and the honour of Florian were irredeemably plighted, took an opportunity to address him one morning as soon as Madelon had quitted the breakfast-room.

"I think it is high time, young man," he said, smiling, "that you should proceed to business. In France you know the executioner is under a compulsory obligation to transmit his office to one of his sons, who grows up with a consciousness of this necessity; and, being systematically trained to it, he submits, in most instances, without repining, to his lot. If the executioner has only daughters, he adopts a young man, who becomes his son-in-law and successor. Come along with me into my workshop."

"Florian looked at him in silent wonder, but unhesitatingly followed him into the capacious cellars, where the old man unlocked a door which his guest had never before observed. Florian entered with his conductor, but started back in dismay as he saw a number of executioner's swords and axes hanging round the walls of a low-vaulted room, in the centre of which



several cabbage-heads were fixed with pegs upon an oblong block of wood. The headsman took one of the swords from the wall, drew it from the scabbard, carefully wiped the glittering blade, and then offered it to Florian. "Now, my son," he began, "try your strength upon these cabbage-heads. It is easy work, and requires nothing but a steady hand."

"Gracious Heaven! you cannot be in earnest!" exclaimed Florian, retreating from him in deadly terror.

"Not in earnest?" rejoined the headsman, sternly; "I consider your compliance as a matter of course. You love my daughter—you have won her affections—and surely, Florian, you are not the man to play her false?"

"God forbid!" exclaimed Florian with honest fervour. "I dearly love her, and seek no happier lot than to become her husband."

"I offered her to you, my son!" said the other with returning kindness; "but you did not like the conditions, and declined her. You have since, without my permission, sought and won her affections, and you have no right to flinch from the implied consequences. It is high time to come to a conclusion, and to apply yourself in good faith to the only pursuit through which you can ever obtain my Madelon."

"The only one!" timidly repeated Florian: "I have, 'tis true, abandoned for your daughter's sake the world and the world's prejudices; but I am young and industrious; I possess valuable knowledge; and, surely, I may find some employment which will maintain a wife and family. Do, my good father, relinquish this dreadful vocation!"

"And my daughter!" exclaimed the headsman, with loud and bitter emphasis. "What is to become of *her*? If even you could step back within the pale of society, *she* would for ever be excluded. But you have neither moral courage nor animal bravery enough for any worldly pursuit—your original station in society is irrecoverably gone—and, if you attempt to leave this safe asylum, the sword of justice will face you at every turn. No, no, Florian! I love my future son-in-law too well to expose him to such imminent and deadly peril. There, read that paper! The contents will bring you to your senses."

"With these words, which struck like a wintry chill into the heart of Florian, he took an old newspaper from his pocket-book. The unhappy fugitive received it with a shaking hand, and read a judicial summons from the authorities of D., seeking intelligence of a student, who had on a certain day quitted the university by the diligence for Normandy, and unaccountably disappeared. His christian and surname, with an accurate description of his dress and person, were appended. Glancing fearfully down the page, he distinguished some particulars of a murder; his sight grew dim with terror; and, after a vain attempt to read farther, he dropped the fatal document, and reeled back, breathless, and almost fainting, against the wall.

"He is the very man!" muttered the headsman, whose keen eye had been intently fixed upon him during the perusal. "I never asked your real name, young man," he continued, "but now I know it. Your terrors would betray it to a child. How then, are you, without fortitude to face the common evils of life, and bearing in every feature a betrayer, to escape the giant-grasp of the French police? And had this calamity never befallen you, how could you gain a support in a world, which, by your own confession, you have ever found ungenial and repulsive? Believe me, Florian! here, and here only, will you find safety, support, and happiness."

"Happiness!" mournfully repeated Florian.

"Yes, happiness!" rejoined the tempter. "You and Madelon love each other, and your affection will be the balm and

cordial of existence. My office descends from generation to generation; it insures to the holder, not only a good house and landed property, but an income of no mean amount. Every traveller who passes my house, pays me a toll, because fifty years since an inundation compelled the town to cut a high-road through my grandfather's garden. Of all these benefits I shall be deprived, when old and disabled, if my children disdain to follow my vocation; and if Madelon were to marry within the pale of that society which regards her father with abhorrence, my house and vineyard would be destroyed by the bigoted and furious populace, and too probably my innocent child along with them. Have you the heart, Florian, to hazard her destruction and your own, in preference to an office essential to the existence of civil society, and from which that obedience to the laws, which is the first duty of a good citizen, removes all self-reproach? With a due sense of the importance of your official duties, you will find yourself sustained in the performance of them; and a practised hand will soon give you firmness enough to follow a vocation attended with no personal risk; but, if you determine to leave me, where will you find resolution to face the perils which surround you? and, if you escape them, how are you to compete in the race of life with the daring and the fleet?"

"The appalling alternatives held out to Florian by the politic headsman, and the consciousness of his own inability either to escape the police, or to steer his way successfully through the shoals and quicksands of life, rendered him incapable of argument or reply. Bewildered and stupefied by contending emotions, his mind became palsied by despair, and his powers of resistance began to fail him. The headsman saw his advantage; but satisfied with the impression he had made upon his hapless victim, he ceased to press any immediate decision, told him to consider of the proposal, and went to his vineyard; while Florian, hastening to his Madelon, was assailed by all the witchery of sighs and tears; by looks which alternately pleaded and upbraided; and by inspiring and cogent arguments, which shamed him into temporary resolution. Thus alternately intimidated by the deep tones and stern denunciations of the father, encouraged by the specious reasonings of the daughter, or soothed by her resistless fascinations; assured, too, by the headsman, that for some years sentences of decapitation, with rare exceptions, had been commuted for the galleys, his power to contend with his tempter abandoned him; and, yielding to his destiny, he commenced his training in a vocation from which every feeling in his nature, and every dictate of his understanding, recoiled with abhorrence.

"Meanwhile, the old man made every requisite preparation, and a month after the assent of Florian to his proposal, the lovers were united. The official appointment of Florian, as adopted successor to the headsman, took place some days before the marriage, and it was stipulated by the town-authorities that, on the next ensuing condemnation of a criminal to death, he should prove on the scaffold his competency to succeed the executioner.

"For many months after this appointment, every arrival of a criminal in the town-prison struck terror into the heart of Florian. Happily, however, the assertion of the headsman, that it was a growing practice of the judicial authorities to substitute the galleys for decapitation, was verified by the fact, and Florian enjoyed several years of domestic happiness, disturbed only by apprehensions which he could never subdue, that sooner or later the evil he so much dreaded would certainly befall him. Meanwhile, his beloved Madelon had made him the happy father of three promising boys, and he began to experience a degree of tranquillity to which he had long been



a stranger; when, at a period in which the town-prison was untenanted, the long-dreaded calamity burst upon his devoted head like a bolt of lightning from a cloudless sky.

"His father-in-law received one morning at breakfast an order from the town-authorities to repair, early on the following day, to a city at ten leagues' distance, and there to behead a criminal whose execution had been delayed by the illness and death of the resident headsman. At this unexpected intelligence, the features of Florian were blanched with horror, but the iron visage of the old executioner betrayed not the slightest emotion. Regardless of his son-in-law's terrors, he viewed this unexpected summons as a fortunate incident, and maintained, that any unskilfulness in decapitation would be of less importance at a distance than in his native town. He regarded also this brief summons as much more favourable to Florian's success than a longer fore-knowledge, and urged in strong and decisive terms the necessity of submission to the call of duty. The blood of Florian froze as he listened, but he acquiesced as usual in timid silence. In the afternoon he yielded to the old man's wish, that he should give what the headsman termed a master-proof of his skill in the science of decapitation, and with cold sweat on his brow severed a number of cabbage-heads to the satisfaction of his teacher. Meanwhile, the sympathizing but energetic Madelon prepared a palatable meal, and endeavoured, more successfully than her uncompromising parent, to sustain and cheer the drooping spirits of the husband she so entirely loved. She could not, however, always suppress her starting tears, and as the night approached, even the firm nature of the old headsman betrayed symptoms of growing anxiety, notwithstanding his endeavours to exhilarate himself by deep potations of his favourite wine.

"After a night of wearying vigilance and internal conflict, the miserable Florian entered at daybreak the vehicle which awaited him and his father-in-law under the arched gateway. With a view to prevent his trembling substitute from witnessing all the preparations for the approaching catastrophe, the old man so measured his progress as to enter the city a few minutes before the appointed hour, and drove immediately to the scene of action, without pausing at the church, to attend, as customary, the mass then performing in presence of the criminal. Soon after their arrival, the melancholy procession approached, and Florian, unable to face the criminal, turned hastily away, ascended the ladder with unsteady steps, and concealed himself behind the massive person of the old headsman, as the victim of offended justice with a firm and measured step mounted the scaffold. The old man felt for his shrinking son-in-law, but kept a stern eye upon him, in hopes to counteract the disabling effects of his rising agony. When, however, the decisive moment approached, he whispered to him, encouragingly—'Be a man, Florian! Beware of looking at the criminal before you strike; but, when his head is lifted, look him boldly in the face, or the people will doubt your courage.'

"Florian fixed on him a vacant stare, but these kindly meant instructions reached not his inward ear. The remembrance of the execution he had witnessed with his friend Bartholdy had flashed upon him, and he recollected the taunting prediction—that he might himself be condemned to the scaffold. His agony rose almost to suffocation; he compared his own destiny with that of the being whom he was about to deprive of life, and he felt that he could not unwillingly have taken his place. At this moment, his attention was caught by the admiring comments of the crowd upon the courageous bearing

and firm unflinching features of the criminal. Roused by these exclamations to a stinging consciousness of his own unmanly timidity, he made a powerful effort, and rallied his expiring energies into a temporary life and action. The headsman now approached him with the broad axe, and whispered, 'Courage, my son! 'tis nothing but a cabbage-head.'

"With a desperate effort, Florian seized the weapon, fixed his dim gaze upon the white neck of the criminal, and, guided more by long practice than by any estimate of place and distance, he struck the death-stroke. The head fell upon the hollow flooring of the scaffold with an appalling bounce, which petrified the unfortunate executioner. The consciousness that he had deprived a fellow-creature of life, now smote him with a withering power, which for some moments deprived him of all volition, and he stood in passive stupor, gazing wildly upon the blood which streamed in torrents from the headless trunk. Immediately, however, his father-in-law again approached him, with a whisper. 'Admirably done, my son! I give you joy! But recollect my warning, and look boldly at your work, or the mob will hoot you as a craven headsman from the scaffold.'

"The old man was obliged to repeat his admonition before it reached the senses of his unconscious son-in-law. Long accustomed to yield unresisting obedience, Florian slowly raised his eyes, at the moment when the executioner's assistant, after showing the criminal's head to the multitude, turned round and held out to him the bleeding and ghastly object.—Gracious Heaven! what were his feelings when he encountered a well-known face—when he saw the yellow pock-marked visage of Bartholdy, whose widely opened, milk-blue eyes were fixed upon him in the glassy, dim, and vacant stare of death!

[To be continued.]

## SPIRIT DRINKING.

WHAT is the secret of this witchery which strong drink exerts over the whole man?—I will try to tell you. After being received into the stomach, it is sucked up by absorbent vessels, is carried into the blood, and circulates through the alimentary organs, through the lungs, muscles, and brain, doubtless through every organ of the body. Not a blood vessel, however minute, not a thread or nerve in the whole animal machine escapes its influence. It disturbs the functions of life; it increases for a time the action of living organs, but lessens the power of that action; hence the deep depression and collapse which follow preternatural excitement. By habitual use, it renders the living fibre less and less susceptible to the healthy operation of unstimulating food and drink; its exciting influences soon become incorporated with all the living actions of the body; and the diurnal sensations of hunger, thirst, and exhaustion, are strongly associated with the recollection of its exhilarating effects, and thus bring along with them the resistless desire for its repetition. Even the brain, that most delicate and wonderful organ, which forms the mysterious link between the other forms of matter and mind, the healthy functions of which are essential to vigorous intellectual operation, is capable of imbibing alcohol, and having all its actions suddenly arrested. In the case of a man who was picked up dead soon after having drunk a quart of gin for a wager, in the vessels of the brain was found a considerable quantity of limpid fluid, distinctly impregnated with gin, both to the sense of smell and taste, and even to the test of inflammability.



## PUBLIC PREACHERS.

I HAVE often lamented the monotonous tone and action of the generality of our clergymen in the pulpit; the latter is most times wholly wanting, except in giving the unfortunate pulpit cushion a few clumsy thumps, which generally produce more dust than they *awaken* attention; or should the reverend gentleman be the owner of a very white hand, it may tempt him to display that and his cambric handkerchief together.

How much, on the contrary, have I been surprised and pleased, upon hearing and seeing the clergy in Lisbon address their congregations! Sermons are not considered in Portugal as *church fixtures*, but are only given upon particular occasions, such as some remarkable saint's day—some public rejoicing, or grieving, &c.; and the report that a sermon is to be preached on such a day, in such a church, is sure to attract an attendance. Nor do I wonder at it. The discourse, which I believe is *actually* studied and weighed prior to delivery, is always conveyed to the hearers by *speech*, not *read* from an ill-written manuscript, and therefore has this advantage, that it leaves the body and every limb at liberty. Whereas, I have in England felt a kind of painful fidget, when I have seen the preacher in evident fear of *not reading it right*, or, as sometimes happened, of turning over two leaves at once, which would produce a kind of cross-reading, calculated to call forth any thing but serious attention in the auditors; or, should he be near-sighted, and not quite master of his subject, you might imagine he was smelling as well as looking at it. Here, on the contrary, the orator being made fully acquainted with what he intends to say, having his head, body, and limbs free from restraint, besides being possessed of a full clear voice, it is no ways astonishing that they should at once instruct, delight, and claim our unqualified approbation.

Though by no means a proficient in the Portuguese language, yet their delivery is so distinct, their emphasis so just, and their action so accordant with their subject, a person may always understand the substance, and much of the detail of their discourses, which, as with us, last about twenty minutes.

## LOVE OF FLOWERS.

THE love of flowers seems a naturally implanted passion, without any alloy or debasing object as a motive; the cottage has its pink, its rose, its polyanthus; the villa its geranium, its dahlia, and its clematis; we cherish them in youth, we admire them in declining days; but, perhaps, it is the early flowers of spring that always bring with them the greatest degree of pleasure, and our affections seem immediately to expand at the sight of the first opening blossom under the sunny wall or sheltered bank, however humble its race may be. In the long and sombre months of winter, our love of nature, like the buds of vegetation, seems close and torpid; but, like them, it unfolds and reanimates with the opening year, and we welcome our long-lost associates with a cordiality that no other season can excite, as friends in a foreign clime. The violet of autumn is greeted with none of the love with which we hail the violet of spring; it is unseasonable; perhaps it brings with it rather a thought of melancholy than of joy; we view it with curiosity, not affection; and thus the late is not like the early rose. It is not intrinsic beauty or splendour that so charms us; for the fair maids of spring cannot compete with the grander matrons of the advanced year; they would be unheeded, perhaps lost, in the rosy bowers of summer and of autumn: no; it is our first meeting with a long-lost friend, the reviving

glow of a natural affection, that so warms us at this season: to maturity they give pleasure, as a harbinger of the renewal of life, a signal of awakening nature, or of a higher promise; to youth, they are expanding being, opening years, hilarity, and joy.—*Journal of a Naturalist.*

## HOSPITALITY OF THE IRISH.

THOSE who do not know Ireland, have no conception of what an immense quantity is given away there in charity; not so much in money however, for, except in the large towns, they have not money to give, but in meal, milk, and potatoes, particularly the last. The Irish peasant, when his potatoes are placed upon his rude table, secured from rolling off by the rim of a sieve, or some such convenience—for, alas! he has no dish—would no more think of denying a meal to the wandering vagrant that passes his door, than he would of arguing with the priest. A stone of potatoes in the week, is taking at a very low rate indeed the estimate of what the smallest farmer probably gives away in this manner, that is, six and a half hundred weight in the year, and he never feels that he gives any thing; but fasten a tax, or poor-rate, of ten shillings a year upon him, and he would feel it as an intolerable burden—probably he would confer with his neighbours upon the policy of laying violent hands on the collector, and pitching him head foremost into the nearest lake or bog-hole.—*Blackwood's Magazine.*

## OBSERVATION.

AN infant, intently gazing upon an attractive object, or examining it with its little hands and lips, is as usefully employed in the cultivation of intellect as the fondest parent can wish. In the early periods of mental culture, more is, however, to be done in this connexion, by allowing a child full scope for its own efforts, than by any direct exertions which can be made by others. When its attention is fixed upon any object, let it remain so; if possible, let the object of sense be brought into view under different aspects, and exposed to the examination of different senses. Before words become to a child the signs of voluntary action, all that can be done is to expose it to sensations, and to allow them to fix the attention; but afterwards, more direct efforts may be made, and the attention may be fixed by various other means, besides the mere action of the sensations themselves. It is a most erroneous idea respecting education, that nothing is done except when children are engaged in the usual rudiments of instruction. A child watching the motions of objects around, their figure and sounds, examining their structure, is employed in a work which it should be our aim as much as possible, to aid and encourage; and from which we may expect very valuable results, both in the faculties and furniture of the mind. The successful acquisition of every science which depends upon experiment, indeed, the acquisition of knowledge of every kind which depends upon the exercise of the perceptive powers, the cultivation of the taste, the common concerns of life, the intercourse of civility, and the efforts of benevolence, require constant exercise of the habit. Whatever method is found to invigorate and correct, the observation should be frequently made use of. Till the understanding has made considerable progress, this should be made a leading object in the intellectual culture; and in every period of it the habit should be frequently brought into exercise. By a proper cultivation of it the memory and judgment are directly cultivated; and while it strengthens and rouses the energy of the mind, it furnishes it with some of the most serviceable materials for the understanding and imagination.



## UNIVERSALITY OF TAXATION.

Taxes upon every article which enters into the mouth or covers the back or is placed under the foot; taxes upon every thing which is pleasant to hear, see, feel, smell, and taste; taxes upon warmth, light, and locomotion; taxes on every thing on earth or the waters under the earth, on every thing that comes from abroad, or is grown at home; taxes on the raw material; taxes on every fresh value that is added to it by the industry of man; taxes on the sauce that pampers the rich man's appetite, and the drug that restores him to health; on the ermine that decorates the judge and the rope that hangs the criminal; on the poor man's salt, the rich man's spice; on the brass nails of the coffin and the ribands of the bride; at bed or board, *couchant or levant*, we must pay. The school-boy whips his taxed top, the beardless youth manages his taxed horse with a taxed bridle on a taxed road; the dying Englishman pouring his medicine which has paid seven per cent. into a spoon which has paid fifteen per cent., flings himself back on his chintz bed which has paid twenty-two per cent., makes his will on an eight pound stamp, and expires in the arms of an apothecary who has paid a license of 100*£*. for the privilege of putting him to death. His whole property is then taxed immediately, from two to ten per cent. Besides the probate of his will, large fees are demanded for burying him in the chancel; his virtues are handed down to posterity on taxed marble, and he is gathered to his fathers—to be taxed no more.

## CHANGE OF AIR.

An important effect of travelling is the influence which constant change of air exerts on the blood. In various diseases, change of air, when that change is only from one part to another, a few miles separated, is productive of the most salutary effects. Nay, it is proved beyond all doubt, that the change from what is considered a good, to what is thought a bad air, is often attended with marked good effects. Hence it is very reasonable to conclude, that the mere change of one kind of air for another has an exhilarating or salutary influence on the animal economy. It is true that we have no instruments to ascertain in what consists this difference of one air from another, since the composition of the atmosphere appears to be nearly the same on all points of earth and ocean. But we know from observation, that there are great differences in air, as far as its effects on the human body are concerned. Hence it would appear, that the human body, confined to one particular air, be it ever so pure, languishes at length, and is bettered by a change. This is supported by analogy. The stomach, if confined to one species of food, however wholesome, will in time languish; and fail to derive that nutriment from it, which it would do if the species of food were occasionally varied. The ruddy complexion, then, of travellers, and of those who are constantly moving from place to place, as stage-coachmen for example, does not, I think, solely depend on the mere action of the open air on the face; but also on the influence which change of air exerts on the blood itself in the lungs.—*Quarterly Medico-Chirurgical Review*.

## THOUGHTS AND THINGS WORTH NOTING.

The best men are those who preserve the boy in them as long as they live; age should not destroy the child. The child is the original, and the man is merely a superstructure upon the boy. It is an unfortunate sign for a man's own happiness when he has forgotten his boyish feeling.

*Shaving Made Easy.*—It would appear from a recent work that the Chinese barbers magnetise, for the purpose of rendering the operation of shaving less disagreeable, and perhaps in some instances where the sensibility is required to be blunted. "I observed," says the author, "that the greater part of the patients slept while they were being shaved, and could not account for this singularity. But one morning I observed a man seat himself a little apart of the rest; I began my task of sketching, when the barber, instead of commencing his operations, placed himself before his customer, and first of all took hold of his hands, then passed his hands several times over the shoulders and before the face of the sitter, who shortly fell into a state of quiet drowsiness, if he did not actually go to sleep. He then moved his customer's head about in every direction he pleased, to facilitate the operation of shaving. When he had finished, he shook the sleeper gently and awoke him. I frequently saw the same thing practised afterwards."—*Hem!*

*Rapidity of Vegetation in India.*—When Lieutenant Eyre, the author of the interesting account of the Cabul insurrection, left Meerut for Afghanistan two years ago, he had commenced a botanical garden at the horse-artillery mess-house, and had planted a number of choice trees. On his returning lately to his old quarters, he was astonished to find the trees grown so high that he could sit under their shade at noon-day, many of them being twenty feet high.

In a back township of Upper Canada, a magistrate, who kept a tavern, sold liquor to people till they got drunk and fought in his house. He then issued a warrant, apprehended them, and tried them on the spot; and, besides fining them, made them treat each other to make up the quarrel.

*Sir Thomas More and Matters of Business.*—The character of Sir Thomas in domestic life was truly amiable. Writing to a friend, whilst he was Lord Chancellor of England, after saying that he devotes nearly the whole of the day abroad to others, and the remainder to his family at home; he goes on:—"I have for myself, that is for literature, no time at all; for when I return home, I must needs converse with my wife, trifle with my children, and talk with my servants. All these I account matters of business, since they cannot be avoided. They are as indispensable to our own happiness, as to our duty, which is to render ourselves, by every means in our power, agreeable to those whom either nature, or chance, or choice have rendered the companions of our lives.

*Opinions of Jeremy Taylor.*—If men did but know what felicity dwells in the cottage of a virtuous poor man—how sound he sleeps, how quiet his breast, how composed his mind, how free from care, how easy his provision, how healthy his morning, how sober his night, how moist his mouth, how joyful his heart—they would never admire the noises, the diseases, the throng of passions, and the violence of unnatural appetites, that fill the houses of the luxurious, and the hearts of the ambitious.

*To Keep Apples.*—It seems not to be generally known, that apples may be kept the whole year round by being immersed in corn, which receives no injury from their contact. If the American apples were packed among grain, they would arrive here in much finer condition.—*Brande's Journal*.

*The Forest Broom.* The seeds of the forest broom are said to be an excellent substitute for coffee. Being moderately roasted, ground and prepared in the manner of ordinary coffee, the difference is represented to be scarcely perceptible. In that part of Holland bordering upon Germany, this substance has been used for coffee for many years.

*Proverbs.*—The following are among the Proverbs selected by the excellent George Herbert, and entitled by him "Jacula Prudentum; or, Outlandish Proverbs and Sentences." This selection was first published in 1640.

Old men go to death; death comes to young men.  
Man prospereth, God disposeth.  
A handful of good life is better than a bushel of learning.  
Every day brings its bread with it.  
Humble hearts have humble desires.  
The horse shows the owner.  
He that gets out of debt grows rich.  
A cold mouth, and warm feet, live long.

It is not the plenty of meat that nourishes, but a good digestion; neither is it the abundance of wealth that makes us happy, but the discreet using of it.



## DEATH'S FINAL CONQUEST.

The glories of our birth and state  
Are shadows, not substantial things;  
There is no armour against fate,

Death lays his icy hands on kings:

Sceptre and crown

Must tumble down,  
And in the dust he equal made  
With the poor crooked scythe and spade.

Some men with swords may reap the field,  
And plant fresh laurels where they kill;  
But their strong nerves at last must yield,  
They tame but one another still:

Early or late

They stoop to fate,

And must give up their murmuring breath  
When they, pale captives, creep to death.

The garlands wither on your brow,  
Then boast no more your mighty deeds;  
Upon Death's purple altar now

See where the victor victim bleeds;

All heads must come  
To the cold tomb;

Only the actions of the just  
Smell sweet, and blossom in the dust.

SHIRLEY.

## A TALE OF THE SEA.

BY HENRY G. BELL.

"Alone, alone, all, all alone

Alone on a wide, wide sea!

And never a one took pity on

My soul in agony."—Coleridge.

I SAILED from the Thames in a merchant brig for Jamaica, I was the only passenger; and before I had been many days on board, it struck me that there was something odd both about the captain and crew. They had all very bad expressions of countenance; and when I happened to be upon deck, I frequently observed that they collected in groups, and seemed to carry on in whispers a mysterious kind of conversation, with which I could not help thinking that I was myself in some way connected. The captain, in particular, was a dark-looking man, with a very ugly meaning in his large bright eyes. He seldom spoke, except in monosyllables, and then the tones of his voice almost startled me. He and I had beds in the same cabin; but I soon discovered that he never slept. Whenever I happened to look across from my own berth towards his, I could see, by the dim light of a lamp that burned upon the table all night, his large eyes glaring full upon me, with a most unnatural kind of intelligence in them. I am not of a timid disposition, but I confess I did not feel altogether comfortable. We had favourable winds, however, and ran across the Atlantic without any thing remarkable occurring.

On the evening of the twenty-fifth day, I was told that the land we saw, about fifteen miles to leeward, was that of the island of St. Domingo, and that, the breeze continuing, we might expect to reach Kingston in little more than eight-and-forty hours. I retired to rest between ten and eleven, with a lighter heart than I had done for some time before; and with the prospect of so soon again meeting several of my oldest and

best friends, I speedily found myself locked in the embraces of slumber, and busily occupied in the ideal world of dreams. Hour after hour passed unnoticed by, and daylight was shining full into my cabin before I again opened my eyes. The sun had been long up, but was not visible. It was one of those calm, grey days, which, in this climate, commonly predict some change of weather. There was that stillness on board the ship which almost always accompanies a calm; for when sailors have nothing to do, they are the last people in the world who will do any thing. I did not hear a step over head, and even the steward and cabin-boys I supposed had fallen asleep; for though I called pretty lustily for my breakfast, not a soul came near me. I rose at length, and having performed my toilet with all convenient speed, I got upon deck. I was somewhat surprised at not seeing a single hand either fore or aft. The very helm was deserted. I went forward to the steerage, but it was empty, and so was every hammock it contained! My pulse began to beat more quickly; I became alarmed and uneasy. I called aloud, but no one answered me. I looked into the hold, but no living thing was to be seen; nay, what struck me as peculiarly odd, there was nothing in the hold at all, except a cask or two of fresh water; though I had been given to understand that the vessel had a full and valuable cargo on board. I went back to the cabin; neither captain nor mate was there. I opened the door of every cupboard and closet, but it was in vain. Conviction of the truth, though at first its very conception almost bewildered me, inevitably forced itself on my mind;—I was the only human being in the ship. During the night she had been purposely abandoned by her crew, and I was left alone to the mercy of the waves. On the previous evening land had been visible at the distance of five or six leagues, but now, having drifted out of my course, it was nowhere to be discovered.

My feelings can neither be imagined nor described, I was perfectly ignorant of all nautical affairs, and consequently had not the most distant idea of what ought to be done. But this was, perhaps, hardly to be regretted; for however great my skill had been, what could a single person have done in the guidance and management of so large a vessel! Had a boat been left, I should instantly have intrusted myself to it, and, though at a venture, endeavoured to steer in some particular direction; but we had only two originally, and they had both been taken away. I could find no loose timber, of which to make a raft, for even a raft I should have considered myself safer on than where I was. There is something that the human mind cannot bear to dwell upon, in the idea that it has lost its power over inert matter, and that all its intellectual energies must succumb to the mere blind chance which governs an inanimate mass. I was alone in a great floating castle, to which seemed to be left the power of determining whither it would carry me, and what fate it would assign me. The very bulk of my prison made me the more helpless; besides, I soon discovered that it was, in the sea-phrased, water-logged, and, no doubt, abandoned under the belief that it was speedily to sink. I would have given any thing for the merest little cock-boat with a single oar, for I should have been comparatively my own master on the wide ocean.

As long as the daylight continued, my situation, though sufficiently solitary, was not so dismal. Light is companionable, and seems to be the natural element of the human soul. But the sun had scarcely set, ere I perceived that the waters were not long to continue unruffled. The sails, almost all of which were set, and which I found it quite impossible to take in, or even to reef, no longer hung motionless by the side of the masts, but, for some time, kept flapping incessantly, like the



wings of a mighty bird, and then becoming steadily filled, carried the ship along with them, I knew not where. Twilight darkened into night; the moon came out of the sea like a sceptre—wan and vapoury—surrounded by a dark assemblage of murky clouds. Stronger and stronger grew the wind. The waves, as they went careering by, left in their tract a broad gleam of foam, that gave to the dark sea an unnatural whiteness. I stood at the stern, with the useless helm in my hand, and almost believed that the whole was a horrible dream, from which, if I did not speedily awake, I might never awake with reason unimpaired. The storm increased; the vessel, from the quantity of canvass she carried, was tossed like a toy from wave to wave. At length, the foremast snap, and, with all its sails and cordage, fell overboard; it was lost among the billows in an instant.

Day returned, but the storm did not abate. The wind was for a while north-west, which blew me back nearly upon the course I had already sailed, but afterwards, shifting several points, it became nearly due north, so that I conjectured it was carrying me along the coast of South America, though that coast was nowhere visible. For several days the hurricane continued, and every moment seemed to bring along with it the promise of destruction; but though the ship was now in the most miserable condition, its planks still held together, and I still continued to exist.

Day after day, week after week, and, were I to judge by my own feelings, I should say year after year, passed on, and I still continued rolling about in my dismantled hulk, sometimes with fair, and sometimes with foul weather, either in the Atlantic or Pacific ocean, I knew not which. There were, luckily, provisions enough on board, such as they were, to have supported me, I should have thought, for any length of time; but existence was becoming too painful to me to admit of my being able to endure it much longer. Let no man talk of solitude, as long as he can see around him fields, and trees, and mountains. All these hold communion with his spirit, and as they vary their garb according to the season, he can read in them lessons of wisdom and improvement. But on the wide and changeless ocean, where human sympathies exist not, and where the very element seems of a nature uncongenial to ours—there, where the eye can see nothing but rolling waters, and the ear catch no sound but that of the breaking wave, there speak of solitude, there feel its horrors, feel your affections stagnant within you, and your mental capabilities mouldering away into nothingness. Look at the sun, the clouds, the stars, and ask, in the frenzy of despair, why you are the only created thing cursed with the curse of speech?

One night the thunder walked through the air; but its peals were welcome to me, for they sounded like the voice of an unseen giant. The waning moon looked dimly down through the snatches of the hurrying clouds, and the lurid lightning flashed far and wide below, as if in mockery of the pale light of the melancholy wanderer of heaven. There was alternate gloom and brightness. In the gloom was heard the savage roaring of the thunder-laden winds; in the brightness was seen the tortured ocean heaving in convulsions, and flinging its spray in impotent wrath far up into the dark concave. Such scenes had become familiar to me, and had almost lost their terrors. My crazy ship went tumbling on, and I had lashed myself to the remnant of one of her masts, lest I should be swept from the deck as every thing else had been already. Again the moon looked down for an instant, again the lightning gushed from the clouds—Good God! a vessel, with all her sails set, bounded past me, and I heard the cries of human beings. Another gleam of moonshine—she was still there!

Another blaze of lightning—she was gone—down—down into the gulf for ever!

The storm passed away, and I was still safe. The wind was in the north, and the ship sailed on. One morning I came upon deck; it was clear, though cold, and the sea at some little distance seemed peopled with islands. How my heart bounded! I was approaching them! Shipwreck—death was all I desired, provided I met it in an attempt to make the land. I came nearer the islands. Heaven and earth! they were islands of ice! Where was I? I had been sailing south.—Had I got within the antarctic circle? Ice—nothing but ice. Huge mountains of dreary ice!

“I was the first that ever burst  
Into that silent sea!”

I know not how it was, but I sailed far in among those frozen fields. The wind at length shifted, and my course was altered. I retraced part of my way, and went more to the east. One night I was in bed, and my vessel was drifting as usual where it pleased. Suddenly it struck against something with a violent shock and crash. I rushed upon deck; the ship was going to pieces. It seemed to have come upon a reef of rocks. It was calm, and I was a good swimmer. I threw myself into the sea, and reaching some of the more prominent heights, I scrambled up upon them, and waited till daylight should discover to me my situation. It came soon enough; I was on the highest peak of two or three insulated rocks, not a hundred yards in circumference altogether, that rose up from the fathomless depths of the southern ocean till they reached a little above its surface. Water—nothing but water, could be seen around. Here, then, on this unknown rock, which no human eye but mine had ever seen before, it was to be my lot to die. I wonder I did not grow mad at once. I recollect that I lost all belief in my personal identity. I could not conceive it possible that I was the same being who had once so keenly enjoyed all the pleasures of social and civilized life;—who had loved and hated, who had laughed and wept, who had feared and hoped. On a solitary peak in the ocean, what was man!—more useless than the sea-weed, more helpless than the bubbles that floated past with the waves. The ship had disappeared; but some fragments still floated along the rock. I took possession of one of them, and drifted away, as I believed, to certain death. Now talk of solitude!—on a single plank in the untraversed South Pacific. I floated away and away; but nature was at length exhausted. I stretched myself out at full length; I closed my eyes and became insensible. When my senses returned, I was on board a French discovery-ship, in a comfortable bed, and enjoying every luxury—and oh! that luxury above all other luxuries—the music of the human voice, when its tones are softened by human affection! I did nothing but weep like a child for a whole week. In two months I was again in England.

## CONSUMPTION OF CURRANTS.

Few persons are aware of the importance of that apparently insignificant article to the comfort of the labouring classes in many districts of the country. We have been favoured with the return of the comparative consumption in the circular of Mr. Wetherby, one of the few brokers engaged in the trade in London, which exhibits a very remarkable increase since the duty was formerly reduced, so as to have brought the price down from about 10d. to 1s. per lb to 5d., about the average price of the past year. The deliveries of currants for consumption



in 1842 was 196,540 cwt., and in 1843 it had increased to 254,744, or about 80 per cent. compared with 1841. Now there is scarcely a doubt but that this very large increase on the consumption has been chiefly by the labouring classes, arising partly from the very greatly reduced price, and partly from the improved condition of the people from more regular employment.

### MEMORY.

SIENOR MAGLIABECHI, a Florentine of the seventeenth century, was of low origin, but raised himself by his extensive learning and astonishing memory. It is said, that there was a trial made of the force of his memory. A gentleman at Florence, who had written a piece which was to be printed, lent the manuscript to Magliabechi; and some time after it had been returned with thanks, came to him again with a melancholy face, and told him of some invented accident, by which he said he had lost his manuscript. The author seemed almost inconsolable for the loss of his work, and entreated Magliabechi, whose character for remembering what he read was already very great, to try to recollect as much of it as he possibly could, and write it down for him, against his next visit. Magliabechi assured him he would, and, on setting about it, wrote down the whole manuscript without missing a single word.

Magliabechi had a local memory too of the places where every book stood; and seems to have carried this no farther than only in relation to the collections of books with which he was personally acquainted. One day the great Duke sent for him, after he was his librarian, to ask him, whether he could get him a book that was particularly scarce. "No, Sir," answered Magliabechi, "it is impossible, for there is but one in the world; that is in the Grand Signior's library at Constantinople, and is the seventh book on the second shelf on the right hand as you go in."

### THE SHARK AND THE GOLD SPECTACLES.

THE narrator once sailed on board a ship, with a very near-sighted passenger, who always wore a pair of gold spectacles. He had forgotten to provide himself with a second pair before he left, and being a man of nervous temperament, he was perpetually worrying himself with the idea that by some accident or other he should lose the only ones he had during the voyage, and thus be left for some time in a most unpleasant predicament, not being able to see a yard before him without the assistance of glasses. Many and dire were the accidents which he was sure would happen to him in the state of semi-blindness to which he would be reduced, when the barnacles were gone. In fact, he would be afraid to venture on deck, being certain to walk overboard, or fall down the companion ladder; and how he should ever get into the boat which was to take him on shore, when the ship arrived at her destination, he knew not. One day they were becalmed near the line, and a large shark was seen by the officer on watch just under the stern. All the passengers, our near-sighted friend among them, rushed aft to see the monster taken, a baited hook having been immediately put overboard. In the scuffle which took place, every one striving to get a good position, down dropped the spectacles from his nose; the shark seized the glittering prize, and, as if satisfied with his acquisition, retired under the counter, refusing the most tempting baits that were successively offered to him during the day. Towards evening, a breeze sprung up, and away they went at nine or ten knots an hour. The nervous man was now in the situation which his morbid fancy had so often presented to him, and the first part of his presentiment having come to pass, he felt like a doomed man; and

seemed to await the fulfilment of his destiny, which, he had persuaded himself, was either to break his neck or be drowned. He locked himself up in his cabin, became moody and reserved, and busied himself with arranging his papers, and making various preparations for his end. The captain and others became seriously alarmed, and attempted to rally him from this monomania, but all to no purpose; he shook his head mournfully when they attempted to laugh him out of it, and solemnly made answer, that time would show he was a doomed man. The wind about the line seldom lasts long; and after five or six days' fair sailing, during which they ran eight or nine hundred miles, the favourable breeze died away, the heavy sails again idly flapped against the masts, and again the usual listlessness which attends a perfect calm at sea, crept over the minds of every one on board. One of the midshipmen who had gone aloft to see if he could desery a sail or any thing else on the vast expanse of water, on which they lay like a log, sang out, that a shark was close to the vessel. Again every body was on the *qui vive*, a hook was soon baited and thrown over, and this time greedily snatched at by John Shark. He was soon hauled on board, and the business of searching his locker commenced with the usual curiosity. The first thing they pulled out were the golden spectacles! They were speedily taken down to the hypochondriac below, and the change which the sight of them made on him was miraculous. He felt he said, just what a man would, who, with the rope already round his neck, is reprieved at the gallows' foot, and at once shaking off the fit of despondency and apprehension which had clung so closely to him, he joined heartily in the laugh which his former fears now raised among his fellow-voyagers. I give this story as I had it, and leave the reader to judge for himself how much of it is true. In a shark which we caught, we found a newspaper of later date than any we had on board, and which was dried and read by all of us, not having been at all injured by its adventures. It must have been dropped from some other ship, and swallowed by our eccentric friend.—*Greenwood's Narrative of the Campaign in Affghanistan.*

### CRUELTY AND SAGACITY.

A CHEMIST in Paris has been experimenting on the effects of poisons. Some ugly dogs have been selected to be operated upon. One of them, more happy than the others, was restored by means of some antidote; he was again poisoned, and again restored. The following day he was to be again poisoned; but he was a sensible dog, and appeared to have penetrated the secrets of the man of science. He would take nothing; neither acetate or morphine, nor bellidonna, nor prussic acid; he would not touch any thing that was offered to him; even bread and meat were refused. When he saw the operator eat a bit of bread, he took what remained; and when he saw the cock of the fountain turned to fill a decanter, he licked up the drops that fell, to satisfy his thirst; but beyond this he was not to be tempted. This continued for some days—he refused all food but what he first saw his master eat, and touched no water but what was used for the rest of the family.

### A FLIGHT OF LOCUSTS.

THE winged locusts first appeared near Tangier. They did not commit much injury, but, settling along the sea-coast, deposited their eggs and died. Some months afterwards, in July, if I remember rightly, the grub first appeared, and was about the size of what is commonly called the lion-ant. A price had been set by several European residents at Tangier



upon each pound of eggs that was brought by the natives, and many thousand pounds weight by this means were destroyed, but apparently it was of no avail; it was but as a drop of water from the ocean; for soon the whole face of the country around was blackened by columns of these voracious insects; and, as they marched on in their desolating track, neither the loftiest barriers, nor water, nor fire, daunted them. Quenching with their numbers the hottest fire, the rear of the dreadful columns passed over the devoted bodies of those who had preceded them. Across ditches, streams, or rivers, it was the same. On, on they marched; and as the foremost ranks of the advanced columns were drowned, their bodies formed the raft for those that followed; and where there seemed most resistance to their progress, thither did the destructive insects appear to swarm in the greatest numbers. One European residing at Tangier, the consul-general for Sweden, who possessed a beautiful garden in the neighbourhood, abounding with the choicest flowers and shrubs of Europe and Africa, waged for a long time successful war against them. His large garden had the advantage of a high wall; and outside this barrier he had stationed labourers, hired for the purpose of destroying the invading columns. Often did the Moslems shake their heads, and, predicting sooner or later the destruction of his garden, exclaim against the wickedness and folly of the Nazarene in attempting to avert the decrees of fate. At one time it had been hoped that this beautiful spot, a favourite resort of the Europeans, had been saved; for, whilst all around had been rendered bare and desolate, the garden yet rejoiced in a luxuriance of vegetation. But the day soon came in which the Moslems' predictions were to be fulfilled. The locusts, ceasing to be crawling grubs, put forth their wings, and took flight. Myriads and myriads, attracted by the freshness, alighted on this oasis of the desert, and in a few hours every green blade disappeared; the very bark of the fruit trees being gnawed in such a manner as to render them incapable of producing fruit the ensuing year.—*Hay's Western Barbary.*

### OMNIPRESENCE OF GOD.

OUR God is present every where,  
In land and sea, in earth and air;  
Should you on eagle's pinions wend  
Your flight to earth's remotest end—  
Scale heaven's vault, or fathom hell,  
There does his infinite being dwell:  
Shall darkness hide thee from his sight?  
To him thick darkness brings no night!

Yet to the humble, those who keep  
Their hearts in love, who mourn and weep,  
His holy presence comes more full,  
To guard, to guide, to watch, to rule,  
The lowly soul, more intimate,  
Receives his dew, and owns it great,  
And as it looks around, above,  
New increase drinks of grace and love.

But ah! to those who turn away,  
Apart from God, to rest on clay,  
God too shall turn away and leave  
Them empty, 'till they wake to grieve,  
Too late their loss—too late to mourn—  
Too late to dream of a return—  
Too late to clasp the Blessed Cross,  
For theirs are then the pains of loss!

Oh, by the love that Jesus bore—  
Here let us turn—here weep—deplora—  
Here let God's holy presence come,  
Here in thy heart prepare a home,  
Here by confession's searching light,  
With glowing love and heart contrite,  
Receive thy God within thy breast,  
Where, watchful ever, he may rest.

### VARIETIES.

*Influence of Various Pursuits on Health.*—Studies that exercise especially the reasoning faculties, whose aim is truth, and which are attended with positive and satisfactory results, affording the most calm and permanent gratification, are the most safe and salutary in their influence on body and mind. Hence it is that those engaged in the exact sciences, as the mathematician, the astronomer, the chemist, usually enjoy better health, firmer nerves, more uniform moral tranquillity, and a longer term of existence, than those whose pursuits are more connected with the imagination; as the poet, or writer of fictitious narrative. In these latter, the deep and varying passions are more frequently awakened; a morbid sensibility is encouraged; and the flame of life exposed to such continual and unnatural excitement, must burn more unequally, and waste more rapidly. Who does not rise with more self-satisfaction, with a more calm, equable, and healthful condition of the mind, from studies which exercise and instruct the intellect, than from the morbidly exciting works of romantic fiction? Poetry and romance, then, ever as they wander from the standard of nature, must become the more prejudicial in their effects on the moral and physical constitution. To illustrate this remark, I need but refer to the writings of Byron and Scott.—*Sweetser's Mental Hygiene.*

*Courtiers.*—Ambition in idleness—meanness mixed with pride—a desire of riches without industry—aversion to truth—flattery, perfidy, violation of engagements, contempt of civil duties, fear of the prince's virtue, hope from his weakness—but above all, a perpetual ridicule cast upon virtue—are, I think, the characteristics by which most courtiers, in all ages and countries, have been constantly distinguished.

Conduct yourselves with the same reserve as if ten eyes were upon you, and ten hands were pointing to you.—As the sword, of the best tempered metal is most flexible, so the truly generous are the most pliant and courteous in their behaviour to their inferiors.—Youth is the vernal season of life, and the blossoms it then puts forth are indications of those future fruits which are to be gathered in the succeeding periods.

*Mexican Custom.*—In one part of this valley—I think between Queretaro and San Juan del Rio—the traveller passes through an immense corn field, or rather a succession of corn fields, miles in extent, the produce of which supplies the neighbouring cities. During a match of nearly two days, nothing could be seen on any side but stacks of Indian corn, the husks still on, and each stack surmounted with a rude wooden cross. The owners of the grain had taken the latter precaution, so it was told us, to prevent the ladrones from preying upon their property; for it is said that nothing can induce the most hardened thief, in that country of petty pilferers, to touch aught which is thus guarded. Whether this is true or false is a point upon which I do not intend to decide; if true, I can say that it is much the cheapest and safest method of preventing theft that could be devised in Mexico, and I would prefer having my property under the guardianship and protection of one wooden cross than of 20 armed men.—*Kendall's Narrative.*

*Melon Sugar.*—It has been discovered in the state of South Carolina, that a very fine quality of sugar may be extracted from the water-melon, which grows in great perfection there. The landlord of a public-house has shown, that all the sugar used in his house during the preceding twelve months, and which had passed as the finest cane, had been obtained from water-melons of his own raising.

*A Spider with ten Eyes.*—A late number of the *Technological Repository* notices, as having been seen by the editor, under an opaque microscope, a black spider from Africa, with no less than ten eyes. Of these, four were placed in a square cluster in the front of its head; two on each side of the front, affixed in pairs, on raised appendages; and two large ones were placed behind the head.

*Marshal Lannes.*—A colonel had one day punished a young officer, just arrived from the college at Fontainebleau, for having manifested fear on a first engagement. Lannes, who so justly appreciated the courage of a soldier, and who in this instance probably knew his man, severely reprimanded the disciplinarian. "Colonel," said the gallant marshal with emphatic energy, "none but a coward dares to boast that he has never known fear!"







